--- 50 Cigarettes - Imperial Tobacco, Montreal - [6-10D] - 1951-53 ---

In 1951 the *excise tax* on cigarettes (no longer printed on the stamp, but still in force) increased from $ 4.00 to $ 5.50 per thousand small cigarettes, and in June 1951 the *monthly* three-lettered date coding changed to a three-digit *weekly* number coding. The initial number seems to be **124** - which probably indicated the 24th week of 1951.

According to an old collection purchased on auction many years ago the number sequences **129-130**, and **134-138** were not used due to a plant strike, and the numbers **145-200** were not used because of a plant shut-down. I feel that this is not exactly true. The new coding system introduced by “Imperial Tobacco” at this time was an adaptation of the “L. O. Grothe” 1939 code in which the *first two digits* gave *the week* of production and the *final digit* gave *the year*.

This *reversed* Imperial 1951 code was intended to run to the 52nd week at **152** and then to reset. After the strike was settled, the main series for 1952 began in the 1st week at **201**. This was intended to run to **252** and stop - however the series was extended uninterrupted into 1953.

Initially the cancellation was in black ink, applied vertically reading down, using a 4½ mm. Gothic number on the right side, plus a 4 mm. Gothic company code **6-10D** reading vertically down on the left side of the stamp. With **231** the company code is dropped from the cancellation, and at **235** the Gothic type face is increased to 6 mm. and the number code, still applied vertically reading down, is doubled. The usage fold, running vertically down the center, separates the numbers and the obvious purpose of the doubling was to show the date code both from the top and from the front of the finished package, since on a slide-box the stamp was applied over the top and down the front face.

With **264** the type face is changed to 5 mm. black Roman (1953), and the two numbers are staggered. With 349 the print face changes to a thinner 4 mm. Roman, and with 354 the alignment is no longer staggered. With 365 the 4 mm. print becomes Gothic, and with 382 (in black) and at **375** (in red) the company code **6-10D** is applied horizontally at the bottom in 3½ mm. pica typeface.

The Budget of 1952 (**264**?) decreased the *excise tax* on small cigarettes from $5.50 to $4.00 per thousand, and the Budget of February 20, 1953 decreased the *excise duty* from $6.00 to $4.00 per thousand, so some changes in coding size are probably related to these decreases. To date the last cancellation used by “Imperial Tobacco” on the fifty cigarette stamp is **344**.

“Imperial Tobacco” did not use their *company code* in the cancellations on most of the fifty cigarette stamps, and used four or five different type faces which directly parallel those used on the smaller cigarette stamps. The stamps of “Tuckett Tobacco” similarly are not company coded, but can easily be distinguished, since the “Tuckett Tobacco” cancellations are all in 4½ mm. heavy Gothic type face with a wide (17 mm) spacing e.g. **2 3 4** as opposed to Imperial Tobacco's use of **234**. “Tuckett Tobacco” was a corporate affiliate of “Imperial Tobacco”, and used the same cancellation coding system.

I feel that the use of the company coding **1-18E** and **6-10D** which appears near the end of the three digit sequence took place when the Hamilton plant was closing, and “Tucketts” cigarettes were being supplied on contract by the Montreal plant.

--- 50 Cigarettes - as used by Imperial Tobacco - three digits - 1951-56 ---

--- 19 copies to date ---

[★RC-404]	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1951	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
1952	---	205	---	---	---	---	225	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	---	207	---	---	---	---	---	---	---			
	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---				
1953	---	---	---	---	---	---	252	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	251	253	---	---	---	---	---
1954	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	304
	---	---	---	273	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	305
				---	278	---	---	---	---	---	---	306
				275	279	---	---	291	---	---	---	---
1955	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	344	---	---
	---	314	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	330	---	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	331*	---	---	---	---	---	---
1956	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

* **331** and **331** are both in the collection.

I have listed only two red cancellations, and have seen *nothing* in black past **344**. I have not found any *two digit codes* on the fifty cigarette stamps. At a collectible show in a local mall some years ago I found a double pack of *twenty-five* encased in a jacket to form a package of *fifty* cigarettes. I believe they were "Export", but I did not have sufficient cash to buy the package. Imperial seems to have discontinued the fifty cigarette tin. As a confirmation their "Peter Jackson" **1-17E** plant in Guelph, which opened in the mid 1960's, *did not* produce a fifty cigarette pack.

File path is [c:\ MS - STAMPS \ RC_STAMPS \ 1935 - Series C \ 50 cigarettes \ 6-10D - number coded],
In MS Word 2007 for Windows 7,
Formatted for a HP CP 1525 Laser Jet,
January 4th 2014, JBH